



MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION
COMMITTEE
43rd session
Agenda item 8

MEPC 43/8/1
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REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Outcome of SLF 42

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This note provides information on the outcome of SLF 42 which is relevant to the work of the Committee.
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 10
<i>Related documents:</i>	SLF 42/18

1 The Sub-Committee on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessel Safety held its forty-second session (SLF 42) from 8 to 12 February 1999 and its report was circulated under the symbol SLF 42/18. The matters of interest to the Committee are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Development of a Code on Polar Navigation

2 SLF 42 made a number of comments on the draft Polar Code (DE 41/WP.7, annex 1), which are contained in paragraph 12.4 of document SLF 42/18. SLF 42 noted that paragraph 14.3.1.2 of the draft Polar Code refers to the carriage of pollutants in tanks and compartments against the hull envelope, and requested MEPC to consider this paragraph (SLF 42/18, paragraph 12.4.7).

Safety aspects of ballast water exchange at sea

3 SLF 42, as instructed by MEPC 42, considered relevant documents submitted to MEPC 42 and SLF 42 on the safety aspects of ballast water exchange at sea.

4 SLF 42 noted that, in these ships mentioned in the relevant documents, ballast water exchange at sea could be conducted safely following certain restrictions included in the relevant ship's documentation. The stability and strength issues were manageable through proper evaluation and timing of the exchange sequence and, in some cases, the use of critical computer analysis of the stability and strength of the ship at the time when ballast water exchange was undertaken. However, as indicated in some of the documents considered, ballast water exchange could increase the likelihood of exceeding the operational limits with regard to stability and strength of the ship. Therefore the ballast water management plan should contain detailed procedures including the identification of stability and strength limitations relative to the specific ballast water exchange operation to be carried at sea. However, some delegations expressed concern about safety limits proposed in those operations. SLF 42 agreed to take into account the recommendations and

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conclusions in the documents in the course of consideration of the draft Code on Ballast Water Management and draft Regulations for the Control and Management of Ship's Ballast Water as appropriate.

5 In the course of consideration of safety issues, SLF 42 also discussed some general issues such as the status of the provisions of the Code, alternatives to ballast water exchange at sea without stability and strength implications, problems of reception facilities for ballast water, etc., and, being of the opinion that these issues were outside the remit of the SLF Sub-Committee, agreed that they should be dealt with by the MEPC itself.

6 The majority of those delegations who spoke at SLF 42 during the discussion on the safety aspects of ballast water exchange at sea expressed serious concern for the implications on the safety of the ship during ballast exchange operations. The suggestion was, therefore, made that the MEPC should consider alternative methods for the protection of the environment from harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens.

7 Regarding review of the guidance on safety aspects of ballast water exchange at sea (appendix 2 to the Annex to resolution A.868(20)), SLF 42 noted that the draft Code on Ballast Water Management had included all safety-related provisions of the Guidance and decided to consider only relevant provisions of the draft Code (MEPC 42/WP.1).

8 SLF 42 did not propose any modifications to the draft Regulations. However, with regard to Regulation 6, SLF 42 was of the view that safety requirements for ballast water management and control should be set out in the binding part of the Code, in order to clearly indicate that these were mandatory requirements.

9 SLF 42 proposed a number of amendments to the draft Code contained in paragraph 14.8 of document SLF 42/18. The amendments to the draft Code proposed by SLF 42 were further considered by DE 42 and suggestions for modifications to the draft Code which reflect the views of SLF 42 and DE 42 are set out at annex to MEPC 43/8/2 for consideration by the Committee.

Action requested of the Committee

10 The Committee is invited to note the above information and to take action as appropriate.